

Grabis-Keech House
CH-700
Burnt Store
Private

1932

Constructed in 1932, the Grabis-Keech House is a modest four-room bungalow with Craftsmen-style details. The frame one-story dwelling has a front gable orientation and an original front gable porch. The overall plan and design closely resembles many pattern book examples from mail order companies such as Sears, Roebuck and Company that were increasingly popular housing options throughout the 1920s and 30s. Standing on a small lot directly on Burnt Store Road approaching Hughesville, the site is shared by an original frame garage and chicken house. Both the interior and exterior are well preserved and retain original siding, windows, interior woodwork and floorplan.

Inventory No. CH-700

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic	Grabis-Keech House
other	

2. Location

street and number	13841 Burnt Store Road	not for publication
city, town	Burnt Store	X vicinity
county	Charles	

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name	Charles Smelser and Donna Getter				
street and number	13841 Burnt Store Road			telephone	Unlisted
city, town	Hughesville	state	MD	zip code	20637-2657

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.	Charles County Courthouse	tax map and parcel:	46 p.4
city, town	LaPlata	liber	2869 folio 479

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report
☐ Other

6. Classification

[illegible]

7. Description

Inventory No. CH-700

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Constructed in 1932, the Grabis-Keech House is a modest four-room bungalow with Craftsmen-style details. The frame one-story dwelling has a front gable orientation and an original front gable porch. Standing on a small lot directly on Burnt Store Road approaching Hughesville, the site is shared with an original frame garage and chicken house. Both the interior and exterior are well preserved and retain original siding, windows, interior woodwork and floorplan.

The dwelling faces northwest and includes a continuous rock-faced concrete block foundation. The frame is sheathed with beveled novelty siding and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. A single interior chimney pierces the roof. Rafters are exposed. The porch is currently screened and has a front-gable roof extending 3/4 of the length of the façade. Square, paneled porch pillars with stepped capitals comprise one of the dwelling's few purely decorative features. Either in pairs or single, all wood windows are original with a 3/1 Craftsmen-style composition and simple square edged wood surrounds. Panes in the upper sash are set in vertical rows.

The front elevation consists of a window and an off-centered door sheltered by the entry porch. The westernmost bay includes a single window that is not under the porch roof. Moving clockwise, the easternmost eave elevation includes two pair of 3/1 windows and a smaller 3/1 toward the rear of the dwelling. The rear elevation has a kitchen doorway, next to a pair of windows. A larger window appears near the east end. Finally, the east elevation has two paired windows on either end and a smaller window centered on the eave wall.

The interior floorplan remains unaltered with the original woodwork and finishes, plaster walls and layout. The simple and efficient layout consists of a living room entered directly from the front entrance, a kitchen to the rear, two bedrooms along the eastern end and a bathroom centered in between.

Outbuildings include a long rectangular chickenhouse and garage. Both have wood frames and are covered with original weatherboard siding. Like the main dwelling, each includes exposed rafters on the eave ends. The garage has a fixed 6-light window on each eave elevation. A small non-contributing shed roof pumphouse also stands on the site.

8. Significance

Inventory No. CH-700

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime industry	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Specific dates 1932

Architect/Builder John A. Grabis

Construction dates 1932

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

Although unassuming in appearance, the Grabis-Keech House is a well-preserved example of a simple Craftsmen-inspired bungalow which was commonly constructed in Charles County throughout the 1920s and 30s.

Originating in California in the early 20th century, the Bungalow quickly became the dominant style of middle and working class housing in the period between 1900-1935. In Charles County, which was predominantly rural, examples continued to be constructed until the eve of World War II. Readily available pattern books and popular magazines promoted bungalows as being both efficient and economical. Some pattern book companies offered pre-cut packages that could be assembled by local contractors. This may be the case with the Grabis-Keech House that is similar to several Sears, Roebuck and Company offered during the late 1920's. "The Ramsay" offered in 1925, 1926 and 1928 featured the same design including a four room and one bath floorplan and a gable-roof front porch. The catalog description reads,

The Ramsay Standard Built Home was designed with the aim of meeting a demand for a modest home at an equally modest price. It has a special appeal to those who live in a suburban centers, who have a small family or who want to live modestly in order to save a sum of money for a more elaborate home in the future.(1)

In 1932, John A. Grabis along with his wife Mary, acquired a small piece of land from the Stonestreet estate. Within the next six years, Grabis was made a widower and in 1938, sold the property, then including improvements to the widow Annie L. Keech who owned the property until 1960. After 1960 it was sold to Samuel and Evelyn Cooksey.

ENDNOTES

(1) Stevenson, Katherine Cole and H. Ward Jandl. Houses By Mail "A Guide to Houses from Sears, Roebuck and Company" National Trust for Historic Preservation. 1986.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. CH-700

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 1

Acreage of historical setting 1

Quadrangle name Hughesville

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Grabis-Keech House is associated with Charles County Property Tax Map 46, Parcel 4.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cathy Currey/Historic Sites Surveyor

organization Charles County Planning Dept.

date 8/9/01

street and number 200 Baltimore Street

telephone 301-396-5815

city or town LaPlata

state MD zip code 20646

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032
410-514-7600

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-700

Section 8 Page 1

Grabis-Keech House

name of property

Charles County, MD

county and state

Chain of title:

September 13, 1999	Tri- County Homes to Charles E. Smelser and Donna E. Getter 2869/479
May 5, 1999	Cooksey family to Tri-County Homes 2796/249
November 14, 1960	Annie L. Keech widow to Samuel L. and Evelyn L. Cooksey 151/326
November 9, 1938	John A. Grabis to Annie L. Keech 69/370
November 25, 1932	Stonestreet heirs to John A. and Mary Grabis 56/208

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-~~694~~ 700

Section 9 Page 1

Grabis-Keech House
name of property
Charles County, Maryland
county and state

Major Bibliographic References:

Brown, Jack D., et al. Charles County, Maryland, A History. Charles County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Charles County Land Records, Charles County Courthouse, La Plata, Maryland.

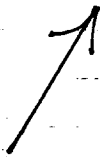
Klapthor, Margaret Brown. The History of Charles County, Maryland. La Plata, MD: Charles County Tercentenary, Inc., 1958.

Stevenson, Katherine Cole and H. Ward Jandl. Houses By Mail: A Guide to Houses from Sears, Roebuck and Company. National Trust for Historic Preservation. 1986.

RESOURCE SKETCH MAP

Date: 7/01

North arrow:



Name: GRABK - KEECH HOUSE

Address: 13841 BURNT STORE ROAD

CH - 700

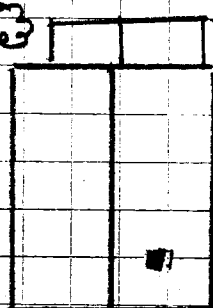
Charles County, Maryland

BURNT STORE ☒ Vicinity

WOODED



CHICKEN HOUSE



COVERED



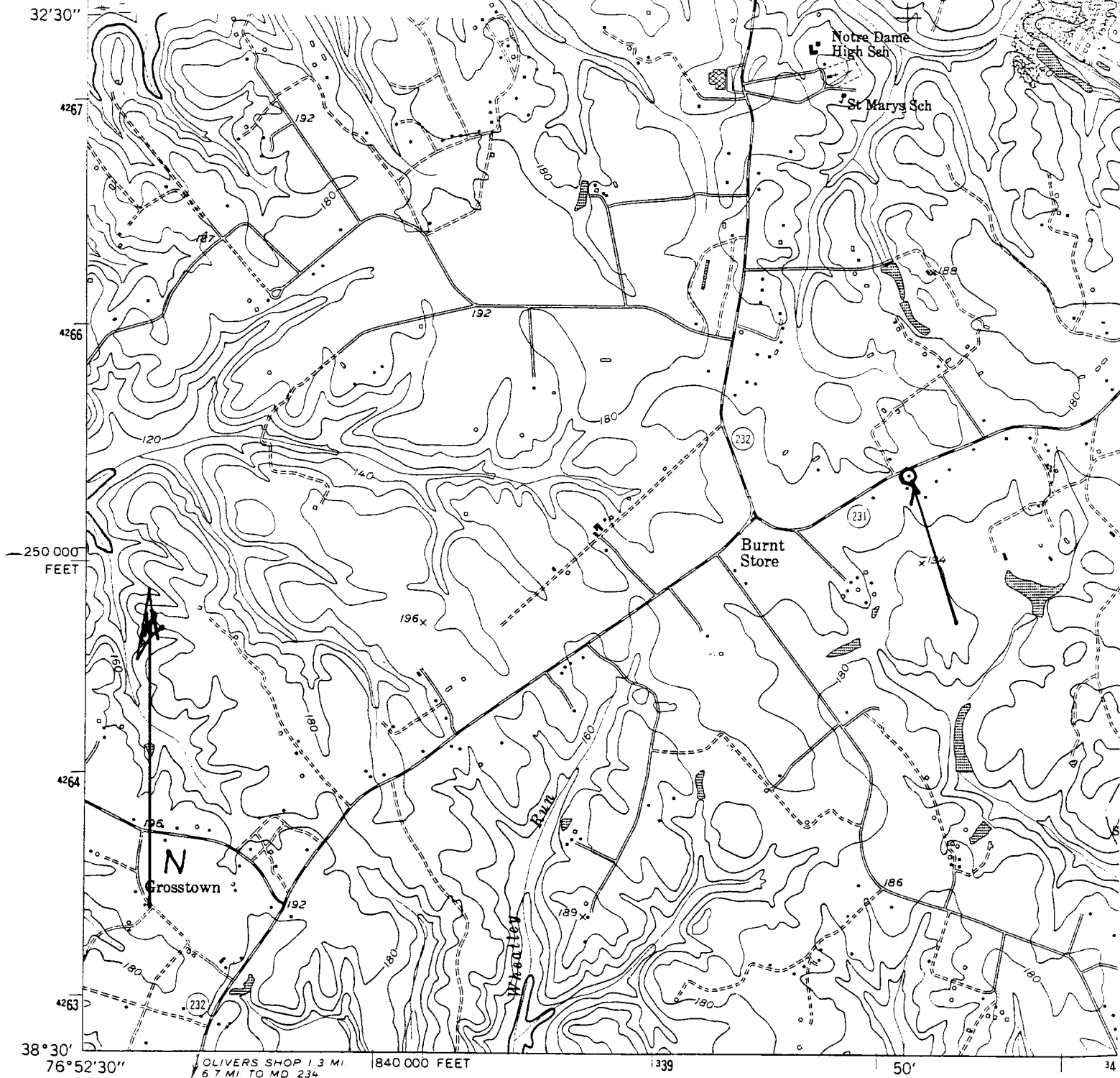
WELL



GARAGE

OPEN FARMLAND

CH- 700 Charles County, MD
 Name: GRABIS-KEECH HOUSE
 Location: BURNT STORE
 Quad: HUGHESVILLE



Mapped by the Army Map Service
 Edited and published by the Geological Survey
 Control by USGS and USC&GS
 Culture and drainage in part compiled from aerial photographs
 taken 1937, 1938, and 1943. Topography by planetable
 surveys 1944. Culture revised by the Geological Survey 1956
 Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
 10,000-foot grid based on Maryland coordinate system
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
 zone 18, shown in blue

UTM GRID AND 1974 MAGNETIC NORTH
 DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



CH-700
GRABBS-KEECH HOUSE
CHARLES COUNTY, MD
5/2001
C. CURREY
MD -HTO
FRONT ELEVATION
1 OF 4



CH-700

GRABK-KEECH HOUSE

CHARLES CO MD

5/2001

C. CURRY

MD SHPO

LOOKING NORTH

2004



CH 700

GRAB-KEECH HOUSE

CHARLES CO, MD

5/2001

C. WEREY

MD SHPO

CHICKEN HOUSE, LOOKING SW

3044



CH-700

GRAB KLESH HOUSE

CHARLES CO, MD

5/2001

C. CURLEY

MD SHPO

CHARNE
4044 LOOKING SE